

Every medical specialty organization in this country challenges the right of insurance companies to interfere in the decision of what treatment is medically necessary or appropriate for a patient. Whether that patient is a young woman giving birth to a baby, or having surgery to treat breast cancer, the insurer has no right to be in the middle, between the patient and the doctor. And in no case should a patient be sent home less than 24 hours after a mastectomy so that an insurance company or hospital can save money.

Representative DELAURO and I, along with many other Members, placed this issue on the table at the end of the last session because we wanted every Member of this body to think about this matter before the convening of the 105th Congress. We spent several months researching the best, most effective way to accomplish the goals we laid out last year. This legislation is consistent with the Kennedy-Kassebaum health insurance reform bill and with the MOMS bill passed last Congress, providing 48-hour maternity stays.

H.R. 135 goes where many angels have feared to tread, into the hallowed halls of a well-heeled industry that is trying to make cost, rather than care, the driving principle of our health care system. This legislation just says "no." It says to anyone who is not the patient or the patient's doctor: "No, you may not dictate when a patient must leave the hospital."

Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to report that almost a year after her surgery, Connie Shorter is a breast cancer survivor, and remains a vital and effective member of my senior staff. More important, she remains a loving, caring and giving spouse, mother, and grandmother, and we all expect her to continue in all these roles for a very long time.

As Connie's story reveals, the devastation of breast cancer is too great to allow Congress to ignore the risks of inadequate medical care. The difficulties, both physical and psychological, associated with mastectomy are too complex. This legislation seeks to ensure that insurance snafus and mindless refusals do not make these difficult situations impossible.

Today, H.R. 135 has almost 200 cosponsors from both sides of the aisle. In addition, a nationwide campaign on the Internet has begun to push us to give this bill and other breast cancer legislation the hearings they deserve. I urge my colleagues who have not already cosponsored this legislation to do so now, and express the hope that Congress will listen to respond to the women of America who seek better and more reliable treatment for breast cancer.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of my special order today.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BRADY). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Connecticut?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Washington [Mr. METCALF] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. METCALF addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

#### RECOGNIZING OCTOBER AS BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee [Mr. CLEMENT] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise on this special occasion, recognizing October as Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

Mr. Speaker, breast cancer is the most common form of cancer affecting women in the United States, with one out of eight women developing this disease in her lifetime. It affects mothers, daughters, wives, and sisters. Both its cause and the means for its cure remain undiscovered.

In honor of October as Breast Cancer Awareness Month, I am pleased to lend my support for the initiatives of this Congress to not only work toward eradicating this dreaded disease, but to ensure that women receive the proper treatment they deserve.

I would like to take this opportunity to call attention to the Internet petition. This petition gives constituents across the Nation a chance to voice their support for the initiatives by the gentlewoman from California [Ms. ESHOO] and the gentlewoman from Connecticut [Ms. DELAURO] to stop insurance companies from forcing women to have drive-through mastectomies, and denying women coverage for reconstructive breast surgery following mastectomies.

As a cosponsor of both of these bills, I am pleased to support this legislation, which would provide much needed improvements in coverage for breast cancer treatment.

A young lady from my State of Tennessee who lost her mother to breast cancer a year ago signed the petition earlier this week. She also added, "Not only do we need to stand up for the above initiatives, but we need to stand up for better treatment and cures for this deadly disease."

Yes, Mr. Speaker, we do need to stand up for better treatment and cures for this deadly disease. I encourage the House of Representatives to hold hearings on these two bills in an effort to see that this legislation is passed into law.

Like many of us down here on the floor tonight, I am dedicated to expanding the Federal commitment to eradicating breast cancer through increased outreach and education programs, as well as through regulation and provision of treatment. Let us work together to find a cure for this dread disease.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to brag on my wife, too, Mary Clement, because she is on the board at the Vanderbilt

Cancer Center in Nashville, TN. She is very outspoken on this particular issue; and also my aunt, who is a State senator, or a former State senator now, from the State of Tennessee, Annabelle Clement O'Brien. She passed some major legislation in the Tennessee General Assembly several years ago, and was just honored, alongside Dr. Benjamin Byrd. Both of them were honored at Vanderbilt University, and I congratulate them.

If all of us will work together, we can accomplish great things.

#### THE CITIZENSHIP REFORM ACT OF 1997

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. BILBRAY] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BILBRAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the Citizenship Reform Act of 1997. The Citizenship Reform Act of 1997 amends the Immigration and Naturalization Act to deny automatic citizenship to children born in the United States who were not born by parents who are legal resident aliens or permanent residents, or U.S. citizens.

Now, Members may say there are not that many people out there who are born to citizens of tourists or illegal aliens, and it is not that big a deal. Mr. Speaker, let me clarify that this has become a big deal. In California alone, we have addressed this issue and seen this issue grow. Over 250,000 children of illegal aliens are now qualified in the county, in one county, of Los Angeles, over 250,000 qualify for benefits such as Medicare, AFDC, WIC, and SSI. In fact, two-thirds of the births in Los Angeles County, Mr. Speaker, in the public hospitals of Los Angeles County, are to parents who are illegal aliens.

The fact is that the cost to the State of California alone is \$500 million for providing welfare and health benefits to the children of illegal aliens. Forty percent of all births in the State of California are children of illegal aliens.

These costs are not just borne by the people of California, they are borne by everyone. I think it is an issue that we now have a responsibility to address. The fact is we have created a loophole and created a benefit for people who break our laws.

I do not fault the mothers who come to the United States so their children can get automatic citizenship and get all these benefits. I do not fault them at all. They are only doing what is legal for them. Who I fault is Congress in Washington, DC, for having this huge loophole, this great encouragement for people to immigrate illegally.

Just in Texas there has recently been a report coming out showing that birth certificates are being sold to Mexican nationals for children that were never even born in the United States. In fact, one midwife has sold over 3,800 phony birth certificates so children could